



Indiana State Department of Health

Epidemiology Resource Center

Quick Facts

About...Adenovirus

What is Adenovirus?

Adenoviruses commonly cause respiratory illness, such as the common cold, bronchitis, and pneumonia. They may also cause other illnesses, such as gastroenteritis, eye infections, bladder inflammation, and rash illness. Severe illnesses can occur in newborn or older patients or in patients with medical conditions, but infection does not appear to be life-threatening in healthy adults. Some strains may cause more severe illness than others strains. Patients with weakened immune systems, or existing respiratory or cardiac disease, may have severe complications of adenovirus infection. There are more than 50 types of this virus that can cause human infections. Different strains circulate at different times based on movements of people and people's immunity to these different strains.

Adenovirus is not a reportable disease therefore there are no numbers to report.

What are the symptoms of Adenovirus?

Symptoms include common cold symptoms such as runny nose, sinus congestion, sore throat, pink eye and cough. More severe infections may include shortness of breath, pneumonia, wheezing, chest pain, and fever. Symptoms of gastroenteritis may include vomiting, diarrhea, and stomach cramps. Symptoms usually occur 3-5 days after exposure.

How is Adenovirus spread?

They are spread in different ways depending on the type of infection and strain. Adenoviruses that cause respiratory and eye infections are spread by contact with an infected persons eyes, nose, or mouth. Adenoviruses that cause gastroenteritis are transmitted by contact with an infected person's feces (stool). You can also get infected by touching objects that have the virus on them and then touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

Who is at risk for getting Adenovirus?

Anyone can get infected. Infants and people with weakened immune systems, or respiratory or cardiac disease, are at higher risk of getting sick. You can get infected by having close contact with people who are infected with these viruses.

How do I know if I have Adenovirus?

See your health care provider. Your health care provider may order lab tests to see if you have an infection.

How is Adenovirus treated?

Most infections are mild and require no treatment. Treatment focuses on relieving the symptoms, which may also go away on their own. Serious illnesses are managed by treating symptoms and complications of the infection. Several antiviral drugs have been used to treat serious infections, such as those caused by strain A14.

How is Adenovirus prevented?

Good hand washing and respiratory etiquette are the best way to prevent illness because there is no vaccine for adenovirus. Frequent and thorough hand wash washing are most important. Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, and throw away used tissues right away. Stay home if you are ill; children who are ill should not attend school or child care. Proper sleep and healthy eating are also important.

All information presented is intended for public use. For more information, please refer to: <http://www.cdc.gov/adenovirus/>

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